



**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024
6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chair Schroeher called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Rick Johnston (Vice Chair), Jeff Luxford, Gary Schroeher (Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Frye

STAFF PRESENT: Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist

VISITORS PRESENT: None

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes.

It was moved by member **Greenleaf** seconded by member **Bolstad**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried, 4:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on April 17, 2024.

The commission members reviewed the draft April 17, 2024 meeting minutes and had the following changes: Item 7B, third paragraph, last sentence, replace 'Member XXXX' with 'It was' and item 7B, fourth paragraph, second sentence, change 'august' to 'August' and remove 'redevelopment grant was awarded to 'grant was awarded for demolition and that an additional grant was applied for'.

Member Luxford arrived at 6:46pm

It was moved by member **Bolstad** seconded by member **Johnston**, to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2024 meeting minutes as amended.

Motion carried, 4:0. Member Luxford abstained.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

Chair Schroeher showed an example photo of a prize drop game as a possible interacting display at the commission's expo table. Commission members like the slot game and agreed to purchase the tabletop version out of their 2024 budget. They brainstormed ideas for handing out prizes based on the game's four slot configuration. Prizes could be awarded by answering questions at the bottom of each of the four slots, or by having an assigned prize for each slot. Three of the slots could be a native seed packet prize and one larger prize in the fourth slot, such as a reusable product, gift card to a local sustainable business, or cash. Commission members discussed using the remaining Cup and Cone tokens as prizes. For the June meeting, commission members will brainstorm ideas for prizes and bring their remaining Cup and Cone coins. Taillon will check on the number of seed packets from last year, and order the tabletop prize drop game and additional seed packets.

B. Electric equipment survey

Commission members reviewed the draft survey created by Member Luxford. They suggested fewer questions, adding more options for responses, and add questions asking if they have existing electric equipment and if a policy exists for electric equipment. Chair Schroeher suggested that the City adopt a policy that would encourage the purchase of electric equipment, not require it. Taillon offered to ask the Public Works director or superintendent for their opinions on the survey.

C. Buckthorn removal event

Chair Schroeher summarized the onsite meeting discussion with Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) staff at Lakewood Hills Park. RWMWD staff suggested starting to remove buckthorn in a less dense area such as near the bench on the north side of Hanlo's Pond and working out to either side, and to partner with volunteer organizations for this work. They also recommend that the cleared areas be seeded and maintained long term after removal. Taillon get an estimate for budget purposes from the City's contracted restoration company for seeding and maintaining the cleared areas. For buckthorn that requires power equipment to remove, the City's Public Works staff would need to remove the larger buckthorn with power equipment after the volunteer event. They also discussed other items that need to be finalized before the event such as a waiver, the minimum allowed age, if snacks and water will be provided, and when the restrooms close for the year.

Member Greene arrived at 7:42 pm

Member Luxford suggested taking before and after pictures of the restoration site. Chair Schroeher having a QR code on a poster at the Expo which will direct people to the volunteer webpage and sign up.

D. Marketfest low/zero waste event subcommittee

Chair Schroeher noted that he emailed the Marketfest coordinator to ask for any updates on the vendor zero waste survey. He said that she plans to send out the survey after the vendor application deadline on May 15th.

The commission members discussed creating a Marketfest low/zero waste subcommittee to work on next steps. Member's Bolstad, Greene, and Greenleaf offered to be on the subcommittee.

Chair Schroeher offered to contact Mill City Farmers Market to learn more about their zero waste program.

Member Greenleaf mentioned that her church was awarded a grant for organics. There was a lot of contamination that resulted in fines so the church stopped food scraps pickup at their location. There is now a sign-up sheet for volunteers to monitor the food scrap bins.

Member Luxford suggested collecting food scraps only at Marketfest to help avoid contamination.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. None

7. DISCUSSION

A. Staff updates

- 2024 No Mow May Program Synopsis

Taillon reported that the City of Rosemount contacted numerous Cities asking about No Mow May in their communities. She showed the survey responses that were shared by Rosemount. Of the twenty communities that responded, 7 are promoting No Mow May or similar, and 9 have another pollinator or native planting/habitat program that they are promoting instead of No Mow May. The Star Tribune recently published an article using the information gathered in this survey.

- Arbor Day tree planting

Taillon reported that Rotary Club volunteers planted 12 native trees and shrubs at Rotary Nature Preserve on April 27th for Arbor Day.

B. Commission member updates

- Reappointments

Member Johnston announced that he declined reappointment. His term will expire on June 30th. Member Greenleaf was reappointed for another term.

Member Greene reported that he attended the Clean Air Yard Care event this evening sponsored by NE Metro Climate Action. The event was held at the White Bear Library

and featured electric lawn equipment on display and a presentation by Jukka Kukkonen, the founder of Shift2Electric. Shift2Electric consults on electric vehicles and are affiliated with the University of St. Thomas. Around 20 people attended in person and another 5 virtually. Member Greene suggests keeping in touch with Shift2Electric and current legislation for lawn equipment grants.

Member Luxford mentioned that he dropped off textiles at the spring cleanup event. The box truck used to collect the textiles was about one-third full. He stated that Ramsey County funded the pilot project and that the textiles collected will be recycled and reused as fill for cushions and other uses. In response to Member Luxford's question, Taillon stated that she will share the Ramsey County report on the pilot project once it's available.

C. Do-outs

New do-out items for May 15, 2024 include:

- Taillon to order tabletop game for the Expo.
- Taillon to check the number of remaining seed packets and order more flowering plants for a total of 50.
- Commission members to bring remaining cup and cone coins to June meeting.
- Commission members to come up with ideas for prizes by the June meeting. Ideas include 50 native seed packs and \$50 of cup and cone coins, plus others.
- Taillon to discuss electric equipment survey with City Engineer or Public Works superintendent.
- Taillon to ask NST about seeding Hanlo's Pond.
- Taillon to make buckthorn removal volunteer sign up poster with QR code for the EAC Expo table.
- Commission members Bolstad, Greenleaf, and Greene volunteered to be on the low/zero waste subcommittee.
- Chair Schroeher to reach out to Mill City Market about their food scraps recycling.

D. June agenda

Commission members asked Taillon to add 2024 Environmental Resources Expo, Electric equipment survey, Buckthorn removal event, Marketfest low/zero waste event subcommittee to the June agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Greene** seconded by member **Luxford** to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Motion carried, 6:0